

ERA Management Board selects Oana Gherghinescu as future ERA Executive Director

Lille, France, 19 March 2025

Oana Gherghinescu has been selected as the future Executive Director of the European Union Agency for Railways (ERA), following a decision by the Agency's Management Board during its 68th meeting.

Holding a doctorate in international economics, Oana Gherghinescu is an accomplished leader with over 22 years of experience, including 11 years of dedicated service within ERA, and 13 years in leadership roles. Recognised for her strong leadership, strategic mindset, and ability to drive impactful change, Oana Gherghinescu has played a pivotal role in shaping ERA's success over the past decade, and she brings a deep institutional knowledge and a visionary approach to the Agency's future. Her expertise in international project management and sustainable development, combined with her commitment to innovation, makes her a great fit to lead ERA into the next chapter.

"We are thrilled to welcome Mrs Gherghinescu as Executive Director to the Agency", said Ms Paloma Iribas Forcat, Chair of the ERA Management Board. "Continuing on from her work as Head of the Executive Office, Mrs Gherghinescu's diverse skill set and extensive experience continue to contribute significantly to the railway safety and interoperability within the European Union, and we are confident that she will drive our mission forward."

Apostolos Tzitzikostas, Commissioner for Sustainable Transport and Tourism stated: "Oana Gherghinescu's strategic vision and extensive experience within ERA makes her the right leader to drive the Agency forward. Her deep institutional knowledge and commitment to innovation will help advance rail safety, digitalisation, and the Single European Railway Area."

"Very honoured to be elected as the next Executive Director for a faster, smarter, and stronger ERA and EU rail system! Challenging times ahead, but together with all the stakeholders, we can turn them into meaningful opportunities!", said Oana Gherghinescu.

The Management Board selection process was concluded in Lille on 19 March 2025. The next step is for the selected candidate to make a presentation to the European Parliament's Committee on Transport and Tourism (TRAN). This is currently expected to take place on 9 April 2025, and their appointment as Executive Director will follow. The actual start date remains to be confirmed.

Until the procedure is formally completed, and the new Executive Director assumes office, Mr Pio Guido will continue to serve as Acting Executive Director. Mr Guido took over as head of the Agency on 1 January 2025, ensuring the continuity after Mr Josef Doppelbauer vacated the function of Executive Director on 31 December 2024 when his 10-year mandate expired.

Background information:

The selection follows an open and transparent procedure launched by the European Commission, with the publication of the vacancy notice in the Official Journal of the European Union. A number of important steps followed as part of that procedure, including interviews of candidates and participation by candidates in a full-day management assessment centre. A shortlist of three candidates was then adopted by the European Commission and communicated to the ERA Management Board to make its selection.

About the EU Agency for Railways: The European Union Agency for Railways was established in Valenciennes in 2004, and has more than 200 employees representing more than 22 European Member States.

ERA has been providing EU Member States and the European Commission with technical assistance in the development and implementation of the Single European Railway Area. This comprises enhancing technical interoperability and harmonising rules, promoting simplified access for customers, developing a common approach to safety and safety culture, advising on telematics applications and ERTMS (European Rail Traffic Management System), monitoring National Safety Authorities and Notified Bodies and facilitating the exchange of information between the railway actors in Europe.

Since 16th June 2019 the EU Agency for Railways is mandated to issue single safety certificates and vehicle (type) authorisations valid in multiple European countries and to ensure an interoperable European Rail Traffic Management System.

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